

2015
One Hundred and Seventh Annual Report
Of the American Phytopathological Society

Annual Meeting

The 107th Annual Meeting of the American Phytopathological Society was held at the Convention Center in Pasadena, CA, July 30 to August 3, 2015. Over 1500 attendees representing more than 50 countries were present. President **Rick Bennett** welcomed participants to two APS plenary sessions based on the meeting theme: Crossroads in Science. The first session, held on Monday, August 3, was entitled Crossroads in Science, and featured two invited speakers. **Doug Parker**, (affiliation) spoke on California's Drought and Drought Response. **Michael Rogers** (affiliation) highlighted the theme of Crossroads in Plant Science. Plenary session II was held on Tuesday, August 4, and featured **Scott Zimmer** (affiliation) speaking on the topic of "When Generations Connect". Complete videos of both plenary sessions are available under the annual meeting archives on APSnet.

Awards and Honors Ceremony

APS regularly honors individuals who have made significant contributions to the science of plant pathology. The awards were presented this year at the Opening General Session of the APS Annual Meeting in Pasadena, CA, to allow membership the opportunity to extend well wishes and congratulations throughout the meeting. The following were honored as this year's APS award recipients:

APS Fellows: Morris R. Bonde, Scott E. Gold, Neil C. Gudmestad, Carol A. Ishimaru, Charles M. Kennerley, Rosemary Loria, James J Marois, Brian D. Olson, Hanumantha R. Pappu, Leland S. Pierson III, Karen-Beth Sholthof, and Gregory L. Tylka.

Excellence in Extension Award: Guido Schnabel

Excellence in Teaching Award: M. G. Milgroom and E.B. Nelson

Ruth Allen Award: N.J. Grunwald

Excellence in Internaitonal Service Award: R.J. Nelson

Lee M. Hutchins Award: I.E. Tzanetakis

Noel T. Keen Award for Research Excellence in Molecular Plant Pathology: T.J. Baum

Syngenta Award: M. Goellner Mitchum

Additional details on the awardees are available at www.apsnet.org/members/awards/

Recognitions also included the APS Foundation International Travel Award, Books of the World Award, 15th I.E. Melhus Symposium Presenters, French-Monar Latin American Award, Frank L. Howard Undergraduate Fellowship, JANE International Research Award, the Schroth Faces of the Future Early Career Professionals Symposium Awards, Mathre Education Endowment Award and the Mathre Student Educational Award, the Raymond J. Tarleton Student Fellowship Award, Plant Pathologists of the Future: Showcasing the Top Graduate Students from APS Division Meetings Symposium Awardees, the APS Student Travel Awards, and the APS Public Policy Early Career Internship.

At the **President's reception**, the following members were recognized for completing their terms in Council, Offices, Boards or Special Committees:

George Abawi, APS Immediate Past President

Mary Palm, Senior Councilor-at-large

Year in Review

APS ICO (Internal Communications Officer), David Gadoury has prepared an article focused on the priorities and actions of Council as his annual report which appeared in the January 2016 issue of Phytopathology News. The balance of the "Year in Review" is included herein.

Society Affairs

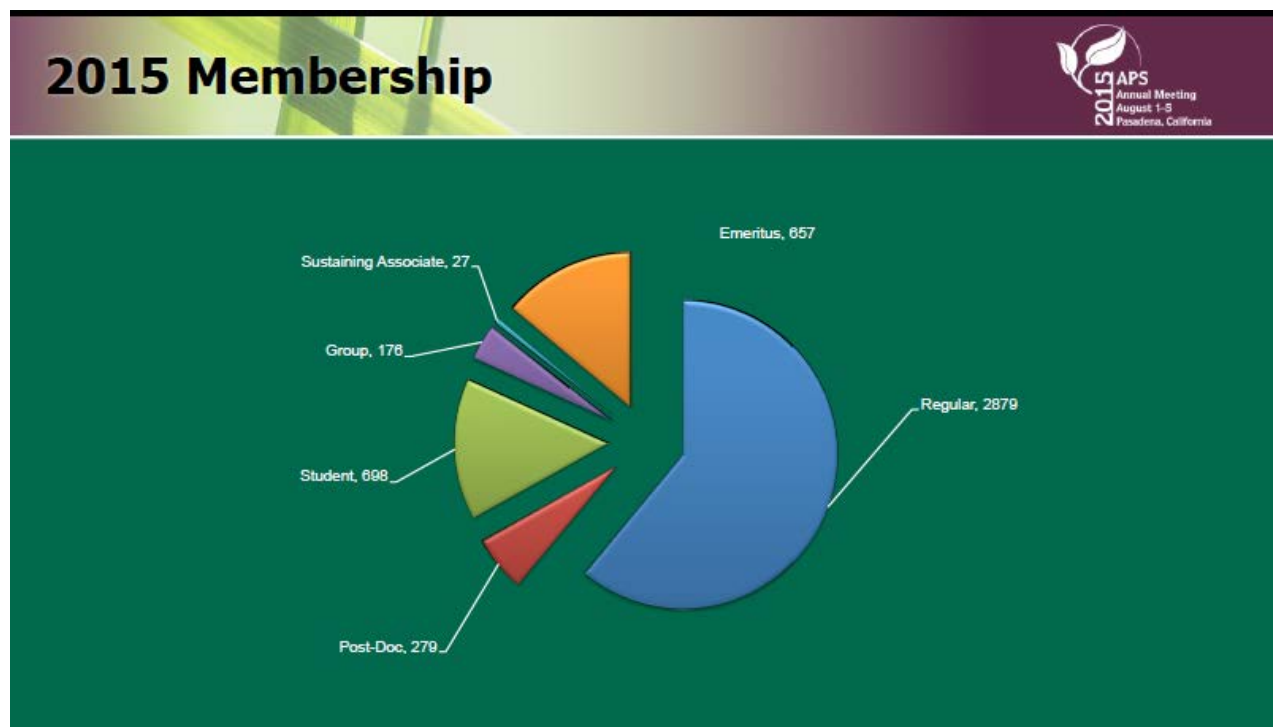
Membership

Total APS membership as of July 30, 2015 was 4716, increased from 4664 for the same date in 2014.

- The percent of membership residing outside the United States remained stable from recent years at 35%. The five countries with the largest number of members in 2015 were China (275), Canada (166), Japan (107), Brazil (72), and Australia (66).
- Relatively small changes were seen in total membership and within most membership categories. The trend of fewer graduating students finding it necessary to enter postdocs prior to finding permanent employment continued, despite the increased numbers of graduating PhDs over the annual average for the decade from 2000 to 2010. One membership category that was new for this year was our undergraduate members enrolled through the Borlaug's Army Initiative, which attracted over 100 new undergraduate members, many of whom attended the annual meeting of APS in 2015, and have gone on to enroll in graduate programs in plant pathology across the US.

Membership by Category:

Regular members - 2879	Down from 2907 in 2014
Student members - 698	Up from 651 in 2014
Post-doctoral members – 279	Up from 246 in 2014
Groups –176	Down from 178 in 2014
Sustaining associates - 27	Down from 28 in 2014
Emeritus/life members - 657	Up from 654 in 2014



Deceased Colleagues – August 2014 - August 2015

A moment of silence was observed at the annual meeting for the following colleagues that passed away during the previous 12-month period.

Joseph G. Barrat
Willaim N. Becker
Frederick H. Berry
Duane Coyier
James E. DeVay
Urban L. Diener
Ruben Duran
Joseph H. Graham
William Haglund
Alan Christopher Hayward
Mary C. Hedenreich
Kenneth D. Hickey
Chester Horner

Harold Jensen
Edward D. Jones
John Paul Jones
Albert G. Kais
Roger P. Kaiser
Anita Leitz Kesler
R.A. Kilpatrick
J. Carols Lozano
Royall T. Moore
Anton Novacky
Gerald Ochocki
Robert L. Powelson
Raoul A. Robinson

William C. Schnathorst
Lars Semb
Lisa Sherpherd Jenkins
Cesar D. Solorzano-Torres
Mark A. Stennes
Hideo Tachibana
Christian A. Thill
H. David Thurston
Leslie A Wanner
David L. Watson
Thomas D. Wyllie

Financial

The APS Report of the Treasurer for 2015 will be published in the March 2016 issue of Phytopathology News.

Future Annual Meeting Sites

2016 July 30 – August 3, Tampa, Florida

2017 August 6-9, San Antonio, Texas

2018 Joint meeting with ICPP, 29 July – 3 August, Boston, Massachusetts

Reports of Council Meetings in 2015

April 13-16, 2015 at the Tampa Convention Center, Tampa, Florida. Council met at the site of the upcoming 2016 annual meeting for discussions that were organized around the following focus topics: The pendulum of change in associations; International engagement; A dialog with Public Policy Board; APS finances; Publications strategy; and Early career engagement. Council toured the convention center and discussed aspects of the facilities with respect to the upcoming annual meeting in Tampa in 2016. Council also visited the UFL Citrus research and extension center at Lake Alfred.

Council reviewed the findings from a survey on the Pendulum of Change conducted by the Council for Engineering and Scientific Societies (CESSE) regarding transformative changes taking place in the scientific society landscape, and considered where APS sits within the core areas that were part of the survey. Key questions concerned were considered for action as APS set its strategic priorities. More than 50 organizations responded to the survey, and most indicated they were exploring possible changes in the key areas identified, with larger organizations already moving to execution of ideas.

Regarding the issue of international engagement, Council reviewed and approved a new Group Member proposal, which was supported by the APS Financial Advisory Committee. The proposal supports efforts of the international engagement plan to increase outreach. This required a constitutional change and vote of membership, which was subsequently approved.

Council continues to work with the Brazilian Society, the Korean Society, and the Latin American Society. Representatives from both the Societies of Brazil and Japan were in attendance at the 2015 annual meeting in Pasadena to continue these discussions. An MOU for Brazil based on the existing CSPP agreement is under development for the Brazilian Society. Rick Bennett provided update on recent meeting with Japan Society for 100th anniversary. Noted in tech sessions, there were several referrals to APS journals. Council voted to dissolve the International Society Relations Committee, and to roll functions and activities into OIP.

Council continued discussions of APS hosting the International Congress of Plant Pathology in 2018. The APS annual meeting and associated activities will be incorporated into the program of ICPP. APS is anticipating 2,000+ attendees at ICPP in 2018.

Regarding an updated publications strategy, The chair of the APS Publications Board reviewed the charge and timeline for new Journal Strategy Task Force. The HELYON journal platform was presented as the newest concept being launched. New features of XML-first enhancements were demonstrated, including alt-metrics. Subscribers will now be able to count the full-text article downloads. The need to promote loyalty of APS members to publish in the journals of the society was emphasized. Members need an overriding reason to choose APS journals over a wealth of others options to publish.

August 2015 at the APS annual meeting in Pasadena, California. Council met briefly at the annual meeting in Pasadena with APS OSTP Fellow Elizabeth Stulenberger reviewed her experiences as a fellow for APS at the Office of Science Technology Policy (OSTP) and the lessons learned regarding science policy. She thanked APS for the invaluable experience and opportunity to serve in this capacity. APS continues to discuss collaborative funding to continue to support an OSTP Fellow.

Council also hosted the 3rd iteration of the Strategic Exchange Forum (SEF) at the APS annual meeting. President Rick Bennett opened the SEF with an overview of the activities of Council over the previous 12 months, including the Phytobiomes Initiative, International Partnerships, a new publications strategy, renewed industry interactions, new engagement initiative (including Borlaug's Army and CADRE), engaging academic units through the development of AULF, and new strategic investments by Council. President-Elect Sally Miller then reviewed the history of the SEF, and the process of revising the APS Strategic Plan, in part based upon input received through the SEF.

The third segment of the SEF forum followed with a presentation and discussion by early career professionals representing recent graduates, graduate students, and undergraduate students. Each reviewed what APS represented to them as a professional society and what services were of high value to them, and they provided suggestions to increase value of APS to other early career professionals. This was followed by division of the SEF members into 8 breakout groups. The key outcomes and recommendations of the SEF were as follows:

- APS should balance special events at the annual meeting that segregate undergraduates against need to integrate undergrads into main meeting structure.
- APS should attempt to shift NextGen attitudes from consumers of instruction and services to engaged members of a profession.
- The Society should attempt to increase awareness within NextGen members regarding extant services and resources of APS. How can we insure that resources are discovered and reach target audiences?
- Data from multiple sources indicates that undergraduate internships have become the most effective recruitment tool at our disposal for graduate programs, especially when linked to APS membership. APS should capitalize on this and continue to build the APSnet site in this area.
- APS needs to explain the balancing act of creating a great annual meeting, and we may need to do this every year, realizing that every year we are to a large degree dealing with up to 25% of the attendees who are relatively new to the annual meeting.

- NextGen members “get it” with respect to the value of the annual meeting. We can capitalize on this by promoting broad opportunities beyond committee membership.
- APS should commit to developing a Career Fair for 2016 meeting, coordinated with AULF, USDA, APHIS, vendors, and OPSR

November 2015 at APS Headquarters in St. Paul, MN. APS Council met from 10-12 November 2015 at the headquarters of Scientific Societies/APS in St. Paul to consider the following focus topics: APS journal strategy recommendations; Outreach and engagement of NextGen plant pathologists; International engagement; The future of Plant Management Network; and The Phytobiomes Initiative.

The Phytobiomes Initiative was developed by APS and is led by APS. It seeks a \$100 million permanent increase in new federal funding for agricultural research. Note that this would be new funding, not redirected from extant agricultural research programs, and that it would be a permanent annual appropriation. The goal of the initiative is to double the amount of safe food and fiber through an improved understanding of the complex interactions that occur between plants, microbes, and animals and how these might be mediated by the environment. The scope of the initiative spans the continuum of fundamental to translational and applied studies. The term Phytobiomes may be somewhat unfamiliar to some, just as Integrated Pest Management was when it was first encountered many years ago. However, like IPM, there will inevitably be a need for diverse particular skill sets, interests, and perspectives as part of this initiative.

With respect to APS journals, impact factors of the APS journals are generally up from 2014 and remain at the top of all plant pathology journals worldwide the time from submission to acceptance across all of our journals decreased substantially throughout 2015, and it was often less than 90 days. In 2016, APS will launch a new journal to capture published research in the emerging area of Phytobiomes, with the appropriately named journal *Phytobiomes*. This new journal represents an opportunity to publish work in a premier journal of the profession, and it will be the first APS journals to be completely Open Access.

In addition to the launch of a new journal, APS will be making changes in some of our other journals to make them even more attractive as venues for publication. Because of the way manuscripts are processed for Plant Health Progress (PHP) PHP, it is not possible to calculate an impact factor, despite the fact that manuscripts are peer reviewed and published by a leading professional society. With all of the freely admitted limitations of impact factors, they are still important to our authors and readers. Future submissions to PHP will include manuscript handling modeled on our print journals, using Manuscript Central, content delivery through Atypon, as well as invoicing and XML/pdf editing through Dartmouth Journal Services. This will allow PHP to be indexed and assigned an impact factor, and it also provides altmetrics (e.g., page views, downloads, citations) on all published articles.

APS Council also discussed updating Plant Disease Management Reports (PDMR) to capitalize on its potential as a database and resource for epidemiology, pathogen biology, and climate change studies. PDMR and its predecessors represent the longest-running (>50 yrs) centralized historical database of disease incidence, disease severity, host phenology, and environmental data spanning dozens of major and minor crops of worldwide importance. There are long-term observations of disease on both untreated control plants, as well as those subjected to various suppressive treatments. The data can be mined for model development, to investigate shifts in fungicide sensitivity, and much more. However, PDMR is now limited in that it is necessary to read every issue and manually transfer data to a spreadsheet for analysis. Council and APS Publications Board is committed to make these data more accessible for analysis.

Engagement of NextGen plant pathologist and international members continues to be a key issue for APS. A significant advancement in services to early career professional, both in the US and overseas, was the launching of the CARDE website on APSnet. The acronym stands for Career Advancement, Development Resources, and Education (www.apsnet.org/careers/CADRE). Many APS members are either searching for, or are fielding requests for, exactly the information that has been developed and organized within CADRE. There are a number of webinars and other resources organized under the broad headings of “Launch Your Career,” “Keep Your Career Moving,” “Building a Bright Future,” and “CADRE Mentoring”. With specific reference to international engagement, APS has continued to build upon previous international engagement efforts through new cooperative agreements with sibling societies in Brazil and India and through new discounted membership options for developing countries. With approximately one-third of our members residing outside the United States, APS remains a US-based society with a significant and substantial international membership.

Annual Reports of the Committees, Boards, and Offices of APS

Annual Meeting Board (AMB) Recent activities: The APS Annual Meeting Board is responsible for planning the annual scientific meeting for APS. Our goal is to provide a high quality scientific program focused on plant pathology to attract leaders in our field and related fields. We also try to plan a balanced meeting that reflects the diverse interests and expertise of our membership and that provides opportunities for people at every career stage to share expertise and interest and to volunteer and participate. Finally we work on developing and evaluating innovative educational methods to allow our members to share information. Our activities over the past year include: 1. Reviewed the 2014 APS Annual Meeting at our AMB meeting in August and in September of 2014 2. Welcomed new members to the AMB in 2014, including Kelly Ivors and Cruz Avila-Adame 3. Changed structure of AMB in 2014 for planning the 2015 meeting. Two senior members (Paul Esker and Peter Ojiambo) took charge of meeting innovations and became responsible for new meeting offerings, such as Idea Cafes and off-site sessions. The poster and field trip chair (Jerry Weiland) also became responsible for poster huddles. The remaining four members (Kelly Ivors, Cruz Avila-Adame, Jeffry Rollins, and Naidu Rayapati) were responsible for assisting with special sessions and arranging contributed oral sessions. This change allowed us to have AMB members dedicated to innovations. 4. The goal of program innovations is to improve opportunities for scientific education, discussion and networking among meeting attendees. We are attempting to find formats that increase and improve discussions and that allow us to add late-breaking findings to our program. 5. Planned the 2015 APS Annual Meeting, which will occur July 31-Aug 5, 2015 6. Began discussions on the 2016, 2017, and 2018 meetings. The 2018 meeting, which is a joint meeting with ICPP, will be more complicated to plan, so we will need to begin planning for it this September at our annual AMB meeting.

Focus: The key issue we are focused on is how to provide multiple formats to allow communication and education about plant health and plant diseases. We are also focused on how to do this in a way that best represents the diverse interests and expertise of our membership and in a way that is both professional and respectful of all participants.

Highlights: 1. Evaluate the 2015 annual meeting to determine which formats should be maintained or expanded and which should be eliminated or reduced. 2. Plan the 2016 annual meeting. 3. Identify possible meeting innovations for future meetings. 4. Define the role of the AMB in planning the 2018 joint meeting with ICPP. 5. Evaluate and refine the new AMB structure.

APS Foundation: Recent activities: The Foundation completed its first 5-year strategic business plan (2010-2015) with resounding success. During this period the total portfolio grew from \$1.2 million to \$2.3 million. Several new award funds were initiated including Books for the World; Plant Pathology Experiential Award; Mathre Student Educational Award; Public Policy Endowment; Steven C. Nelson Early Career Professional Development Fund, as well as several new Named Student Travel awards. Foundation successfully introduced a management fee for all funds that provides monies for operational expenses. During the plan years, both the percent of members donating to the Foundation and the average amount of donations increased. A 5-year summary of Foundation activities was presented to Council in May, 2015.

Focus: The Foundation Board just completed the next 5-year strategic plan (2015-2020). Some of the goals in the 2010-2015 plan are included in the new plan, such as increasing the percentage of APS members contributing to the Foundation and increasing the total annual contributions.

Highlights: Foundation will focus on several new areas. One objective will be to utilize new communication and fundraising tools to assist in increasing the contributions. Foundation will also focus on the growing emeritus membership and encourage them to contribute their time in support of both Foundation and APS activities. The Board will also focus on building additional support for undergraduates by providing additional travel and research awards. Several other objectives will be pursued.

APS Historian: Recent activities: Narrative of Activities APS Historian - Paul D. Peterson October 27, 2015 My primary recent activity has involved serving as a member on the APS Ad hoc Committee on the Documentation and Communication of the Impact of Plant Pathology. As the title suggests, the major goal of the committee has been to define outcomes most critical to the profession with respect to documenting and communicating impact. As APS Historian, my role has been to provide background and context on earlier examples of APS leadership in these areas and to show the timelessness of the issues before us today. To this end, I provided the committee with a brief review of historical APS activities to be attached to the final committee report in November. One of my primary continuing activities is the promotion of an awareness of the history of APS and plant pathology through publications and presentations. A principal objective this year has been to form new collaborations with APS members and other scholars with interests in pursuing historical projects. In this regard, I currently am collaborating with Dr. Frank Dugan on an annotated international bibliography of historical plant pathology sources. In addition to addressing the needs and preservation of APS historical records, I also help facilitate the care and preservation of other historical records and collections related to our field. Recently I helped facilitate the transfer of a collection of Erwin Frink Smith papers to the Systematic Mycology and Microbiology Laboratory, USDA-ARS, Beltsville, MD; a complete and rare set of the published scientific reports and papers from the Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Science Research to the D.H. Hill Library at North Carolina State University; and, a collection of historical records from the former Oxford Tobacco Research Station to the Archives at North Carolina State University. Another primary ongoing activity involves periodic contributions to the APSnet Feature article series on historical aspects of plant pathology. Recently I published an article on the unusual participation of the public in the former USDA Barberry Eradication Program for stem rust control. Currently I am working on an article involving a little-known USDA program to collect fungal spores, bacteria and pollen grains by airplane during the first decades of the 20th century.

Focus: • Promoting an awareness of the history of the APS and plant pathology. • Developing improved strategies for the preservation of APS historical records. • Answering queries and facilitating document requests on matters related to the history of APS and plant pathology from APS officers, headquarters' staff, Society members, and others.

Highlights: • A major goal for the upcoming year is to serve as a collaborator on historical projects with APS members and other scholars. I will continue working with Dr. Frank Dugan on an annotated international bibliography of historical plant pathology sources for the History Section of the APS website. The annotated bibliography will provide an invaluable reference resource for APS members and others who wish to learn more about the history of plant pathology worldwide. • I will continue to provide periodic contributions on historical aspects of plant pathology to the APSnet Feature article series. Currently I am completing an article involving a little-known USDA program to collect fungal spores, bacteria and pollen grains by airplane during the first decades of the 20th century. Besides the science, there are some rather interesting personal stories involved in this early period, including the participation of Charles A. Lindbergh, whom I suspect few if any plant pathologists know of his contributions to our field.

Awards and Honors Committee (AHC): Recent activities: The responsibility of the Awards and Honors Committee each year is to make the call for nomination of candidates for the awards of Fellow, named awards, and awards of excellence to be submitted by November 1, review the nominations, recommend awardees, and communicate results. Last year, the Nomination Form was amended so the carryover status can be clearly indicated, for nominations that can be considered for three years. Nominators are asked to check: 'Original' and year; 'Updated' and year of original nomination, with (Updated nominations require a new full nomination package) added; or 'Re-nomination', indicating year of the original nomination. All nominations were made accessible to the committee by APS staff on December 2 for review and ranking by all committee members. Final decisions of awardees were made by consensus at the January 31 meeting. There were 52 nominations in 2015, 15 less than in each of the last two years. Of these, 28 were for Fellow, and 12 were recommended to receive the award. Only 24 eligible nominations were received for seven awards, from one to six for each. No nominations were submitted for 3 awards, which is a concern to the committee. These were: Industry, Regulatory Affairs and Crop Security, and Hewitt. Following the selection meeting, successful awardees were notified by the APS president. The Nomination Form was changed this year to have the nominator write a one to two-sentence summary for the basis of the award nomination. This facilitates drafting of awardee letters by the AHC chair and APS staff that are sent by APS President, and in preparation of material for the awards ceremony. Each AHC member has the responsibility to give assistance to 2-3 awardees in preparing their biographical sketches for publication on-line, and assuring that deadlines required by APS staff are met. New members of the seven-person committee are selected annually to meet geographical and disciplinary diversity, and the required majority of Fellows.

Focus: Key scientific issues are acknowledged and rewarded by the accomplishments of the awardees, particularly in the Ruth Allen, Noel Keen, and other named awards. The Awards Ceremony brings these to the attention of the membership.

Highlights: We recommend editing and republishing the 2004 discussion of the Awards and Honors Program and nomination information from *Phytopathology News* (September 2004, Volume 38, No. 9). Details of the current nomination package, such as the nomination cover page, and electronic submission, have changed since this article was published. The article on how to write a good nomination, and how to obtain the required information without notifying the nominee, could be published together with this discussion of the program. The article also could mention that the “Fellow” is considered a terminal award and Fellows are not eligible for excellence awards for the same professional accomplishments. This updated article could be linked to the APS Awards web pages for the continuing edification of nominators (and AHC committee members!).

Divisional Forum (DF): Recent activities: When the Division Forum was established we developed an engagement plan. This plan has provided a good opportunity to share successful approaches and identify areas where greater emphasis and activity may be necessary across the 6 APS divisions. An executive summary of the implementation of this plan is available and the entire report will be available after Pasadena. Once again, the Divisional Forum will sponsor a special session at the APS annual meeting for our top student paper winners. Billed as the “Best of the Best”, this session was very successful the last 2 years. Each division is supporting their student oral winners to attend the annual APS meeting. The oral presentation session remains critical at divisional meetings and the DF would like to see this emphasis continue, as oral presentations are harder to secure at the larger annual APS meeting. The forum has addressed the topic of abstract quality at the division level. The majority of abstracts at annual and Divisional meetings are of good quality, however, we felt suggesting peer review before submission would help increase the quality of meeting abstracts. All authors will now encounter “Criteria for Abstract Acceptance” when developing abstracts for all division meetings. In addition, the following statement will also be part of the criteria, “Abstracts should be reviewed by all authors and peer reviewed by two additional people for scientific merit as well as grammatical, typographical, or factual errors.” At this point there is no formal system for policing this policy. It will be up to the abstract authors to implement this on their own. The Divisional Forum has been working on a financial stability plan. The proposal to diversify our investments to guard against market downturns similar to what happened in 2008-2009 was defeated. At this time we are working on a document entitled “Financial Guidelines for new Division Treasures” to help divisions understand their financial situations.

Focus: Education: While divisions have many ongoing high school and undergraduate educational efforts, such efforts are not always reported to APS. Efforts can be further documented and accounted for to demonstrate impact to APS. Extension: Some divisions have formal programs each year at their meetings. Others have held extension events as appropriate for the given year/location or offer ad hoc opportunities for extension specialist interactions. Industry & Extension Interaction: Engagement seems to be dependent on the venue for the meeting and is tailored to the appropriate commodities and industries in the area. Leadership: Divisions are generous with awards to support student travel and poster/oral winners. Amounts of awards differ by division, with some divisions mitigating amount of individual awards (and number) based on their account status and number of applicants. Early career professionals seem to be lacking in attendance and this may need to be addressed in upcoming years.

Highlights: Finish the implementation document of the engagement plan. Update the engagement plan based on those results. Survey our top student winners to see the effect of the annual meeting special session. Evaluate the effect of implementing the “Criteria for Abstract Acceptance”. Develop a document entitled “Financial Guidelines for new Division Treasures”

Financial Advisory Committee (FAC): The Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) and APS headquarters staff meet periodically to review financial matters related to the operation of the society and to refine the APS strategic financial plan. FAC, headquarters staff, and leaders of APS business centers update and revise the strategic financial plan annually to ensure that funds are available to support all activities of the society. An overall society programmatic strategic plan is in place to put forth a strategy to meet the mission and vision for the future. Council and the officers regularly analyze the external environment and make progress toward assigning responsibility for developing and executing strategies to attain the goals of the society’s strategic plan. Having a strategic financial plan helps us, as a society, to provide a focus for our resources and is used as a guide for the various committees and staff to do their jobs. Strategic targets inform everyone as to what is expected from their programs several years in advance so they can build and execute strategies over several budget years. The role of FAC in this process is not to get involved in program specific strategy building, but rather to develop financial goals, build business plans to meet those goals, and monitor progress toward each goal. FAC continually asks the difficult questions such as which programs should break even and which are expected to generate surplus to invest in our programs and services that best benefit our members. This plan continues to work for the society, allowing us to invest in our future.

The FY15 profit from operations (excluding investments) was concluded with a surplus of \$54,497. This net income from operations was before adjustment for the funded status of the APS pension plan of \$952,322. This adjustment increased income and is based on an actuarial analysis with several variables and as such the amount can fluctuate significantly from year to year. The liability magnitude is currently lower due to freezing the plan June 30, 2015 and moving to a defined contribution plan with funds going into a traditional 403B.

The FY15 income and expense categories for the society will be detailed in the Treasurers Report to be published separately in *Phytopathology News*. Our society’s total income was \$5,218,553 derived from several sources, with total operating expenses of \$5,164,056 incurred during FY15. The total assets of the society as of June 30, 2015, including restricted funds, were \$9.9 million and liabilities totaled \$4.7 million. This resulted in total net assets of \$5.2 million.

Leadership Institute (LI): Recent Activities: The APS Leadership Institute hosted the LI workshop ‘Build Better Relationships – Leverage Conflict as Opportunity’ at the APS Annual Meeting in Minneapolis. Because science is a social occupation, leaders at all levels need to build positive relationships and manage conflict in productive ways. The inability to do these things can stall or derail a career. Unfortunately, these “soft” skills do not come naturally to all people and are often overlooked in academic coursework.

This pre-conference session focused on: Effective workplace behaviors and building relationships and developing skills to positively resolve conflict in the workplace. The session was facilitated by Sherry Harsch-Porter, Ph.D., president of The Porter Bay Group, Inc. The \$95 cost for

the workshop was substantially supported by the APS Council as a priority for leadership development within APS. In addition to the APS support, attendee fees help cover your individual work style assessment, workshop materials, coffee breaks and lunch. There were approximately 40 attendees. Additionally, attendees were given lunchtime presentations on six volunteer opportunities in APS, and attendees signed up on the spot for future participation in these critical need areas (e.g., Public Policy Board, Publications, Networking Workshop). A summary of the combined results of all LI workshops were presented to APS council in February 2015.

In June, 2015 we conducted a survey of APS membership about leadership training opportunities and needs, and to inform future workshops. The results will be published as part of a Plant Disease feature article on leadership within the plant sciences. In collaboration with CADRE and the Graduate Student committees, pilot career training modules were presented at the Potomac and North Central division meetings. We continue to provide a column on leadership issues for APS members in Phytopathology News.

Highlights: We are currently developing 2015 workshop, titled: Mastering the Art and Science of Influence. The average person spends 24 minutes of each hour attempting to influence other people. We sell our ideas, move people to action and build our credibility as scientists. This workshop will explore the principles of influence and persuasion and attendees will learn how to analyze their audience based on receptivity and decision-making style; develop an effective proposition; and, they will have the opportunity to draft an influence strategy using a current issue or topic they face. As per previous years, the \$75 cost for the workshop was substantially supported by the APS Council as a priority for leadership development within APS. In addition to the APS support, the attendee's fees will help cover the individual assessment, workshop materials, coffee breaks and lunch. Thirty-four students are currently registered. APS LI is also collaborating with CADRE and the Graduate Student committee to develop a Mentorship Program.

Nominations Committee: Recent activities: New activities Working with Headquarters staff, we coordinated the nomination, application, and election process for the officers of APS. With a strong slate of candidates, the election was held in May 2015. Mary Palm was elected Vice President and Paul Vincelli was elected Councilor at Large. The percent of members voting was 19%, 2 points lower than in 2014 and 5 points lower than in 2013.

Focus: Continue coordinating the nomination, application, and election process for Vice President and Councilor at Large. Striving to receive as many excellent nominations as possible.

Highlights: We will: 1) Oversee a robust process for soliciting nominations and applications for the CAL and VP positions; 2) Evaluate applications for these offices and select the two candidates for each office, based on the leadership needs of Council and the society, while being fully aware of diversity issues; and 3) Work with APS headquarters staff in coordinating all aspects of the election process. Future potential leaders of APS will be identified, and names will be given to directors of boards and offices.

Office of Education (OE): Recent activities: The office of Education has been highly active since August of 2014. On December 12-13, 2014, the OE held our annual retreat at headquarters. At that retreat, we reviewed the following year's goals and action points, received a report from our council representative, received updates from other APS groups such as OPRO and CADRE, engaged AULF and developed plans for 2015. A bullet point summary of the Action Plan for 2014 was developed and is provided below along with accomplishments to date on each.

- Increased attention is needed for undergraduate involvement in APS. OE to set up brainstorm session immediately following the OE Board meeting in Pasadena 2014 to discuss undergrad engagement in APS. This meeting is planned and will take place.
- Propose that all Howard applicants be signed up for Borlaug's Army, and reword reference to this effort to expand beyond just REU, could be any internship. This action will be discussed and implemented following the 2014 Annual Meeting.
- The Education Center has been undergoing a re-design for over a year. Next step is to focus on the fine details. This will be the focus of the 2015 annual retreat with the anticipation of completing the needed fine editing and design.
- Promotion of webinars across APS groups is needed with the goal of reaching broader audiences and international members. Numerous groups and subject matter committees have been approached to consider webinars through 2014/2015. Additional ones will be engaged at the Annual Meeting.
- AULF. This is critical group for OE to collaborate with. Need to maintain good lines of communication. The Chair or AULF attended the OE Annual Retreat in 2014 and the Director of the OE attended the AULF meeting in 2014. The OE has developed a survey to identify the key individuals in each department represented in AULF to gather information from and set up lines of communion.
- Efforts to support the education mission of the international contingent is needed. The OE has set up a task force to focus on international education needs with the goal of developing a strategy for the society.
- Closer interaction with CADRE is needed. OE has engaged CADRE on several occasions and is working to support their efforts, especially with videos of experts.

Focus: Generating synergy between groups in APS active in the realm of education. Being the strategic body with regards to education activities within APS. Insureing that APS is providing educational materials and support to educators at all level with regard to Plant Pathology. Insuring that APS is recognized world wide as the premier source of educational materials in Plant Pathology.

Highlights: Convene a meet of the OE in December 2015 with the specific goal of international education support and to fine tune the new Ed Center design. - Continue to work with CADRE to generate informational videos on a variety of topics to support the education and professional training of graduate students - Work with the Ed Center on their re-design and enrich their content -Continue close discussion with the AULF to support education at academic units throughout the society by attending that NCAC-16 and AULF meetings. - Collect syllabi from academic units and make them available to instructors throughout APS - Develop a plan to support Plant Pathology educational needs of the international members - Host a webinar on Novel Classroom Techniques -Work with offices, committees, and forums across APS to develop an undergraduate engagement plan

Office of International Programs (OIP): Recent activities: GLOBAL EXPERIENCE: Four proposals were submitted. The award went to Sally Mallowa, a Kenyan Ph.D. student, Iowa State University. Her project was Strengthening knowledge of cassava virus diseases: improving field diagnosis and development of an undergraduate-level teaching resource on cassava brown streak disease in East Africa. INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL FUND: Five proposals were submitted from Brazil, Pakistan (three), and Nigeria. The award went Dr. Abdul Rehman, Plant Pathology Department, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Pakistan. His presentation at the 2015 APS annual meeting was Strategies for improving the Kinnow Scab/Malonose management plan: major export quality issue in Pakistani Citrus. JANE AWARD: Two proposals were submitted. The award went to Dr. Erica Goss, University of Florida. Her project was Evolutionary genomics of *Phytophthora megakarya*, major cause of black pod disease in Africa. Library Assistance Program: Since August 2014, there was 7 one request; 17 books were sent to University of Jos, Nigeria. Books for the World: Five publications were sent to Dr. Olanrewaju Folusho Olotuah, Department of Plant Science and Biotechnology, Adekunle Ajasin University, Nigeria. Four teaching references were sent to Dr. Tsitsi Nyamupingidza, School of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, Zimbabwe. Four Compendia and one teaching reference were sent to Dr. Faheem Uddin Rajer and Dr. Muhammad Ibrahim Khaskheli, Sindh Agriculture University, Pakistan. 2014 APS Annual Meeting Recordings: OIP worked with Sally Miller, Betty Ford, and others to deliver 25 recordings of the 2014 APS meeting in flash drive format that went to recipient universities and institutions in Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Ecuador, Mexico, Laos, Pakistan, Turkey, Serbia, Ghana, Uzbekistan, and Azerbaijan. Conversion of APS group membership to an individual membership: This plan was approved by OIP members and the APS Financial Advisory Committee and APS Council. OIP will provide an outline to current group members that qualify to transition to a regular membership at the discounted rate and solicit feedback from them. The constitutional change will be available to vote on in the May election. Silent Auction 2015: OIP Members had a conference call to discuss a new plan for the Silent Auction. The decision was to do an all-online Mobile bidding using Bidding Owl instead of a traditional all in-person bidding. The instructions for bidding were placed on the OIP Silent Auction website.

Focus: To increase APS membership in some specific countries of South America by highlighting the great benefits of an APS membership. The economies of some of these countries such as Brazil, Chile, and Colombia, and even Peru, has improved significantly. In addition, the agricultural sector in these countries is improving and there is a desire to improve the condition of current agricultural research activities, including plant pathological research. Thus, there is an opportunity to reach young plant pathologists in these countries.

Highlights: To increase funds needed for some of the APS-OIP awards and programs. This plan would include two main activities. One would be to form a special committee with the goal of increasing the Silent Auction funds by reaching more corporate donors. The other activity would be to also reach as well as individual donors. Individual donors would be APS members that are familiar with the efforts of OIP to promote greater worldwide interaction between plant pathologists from the United States and other countries of the world and are willing to provide funds that would specifically benefit the OIP awards (Global Experience award, JANE Award, and the International Travel Award) as well as the OIP Programs (Library Assistance Program, Books for the world and the Silent Auction).

Office of Private Sector Relations (OPSR): Recent activities: The Office of Private Sector Relations (OPSR) implemented two new initiatives in 2014-2015. First are new Experiential Awards available to individuals and departments, sponsored by the APS Office of Private Sector Relations (OPSR) with support from APS Foundation. The awards were created with seed funding from the Don and Judy Mathre Education Endowment and through the support of private sector companies. The purpose of these awards is to promote career and research development experience with organizations outside of academia. This year's recipients were Jade Florence of Oregon State University and the Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology Department at Louisiana State University. Second was the first ever Industry/Government Tour for graduate students and post-docs to learn about what types of careers are possible outside of academia. The Tour was held July 14-15 in Research Triangle Park in North Carolina and was attended by 22 students and post-docs from 11 different universities from across the U.S. The Tour made stops with Syngenta, Bayer, Dow AgroSciences, Monsanto, and USDA-APHIS. Last, OPSR is co-hosting a special session to discuss careers in industry: how to prepare, apply, and interview for them as well as how to succeed once on the job. The videos from this special session will be posted on the APS website for students to refer to at their own convenience.

Focus: For the last few years, OPSR has focused on increasing the engagement between academia and industry, primarily through education and outreach with the student and post-doc population. The goal of these efforts is two-fold: 1) to increase the awareness career options in Industry and 2) to develop relationships with our future talent for either future hiring or collaborations. In the long-term all of our initiatives will contribute directly to increasing opportunities for professional growth and development.

Highlights: Our next goal will be to formalize our connection with CADRE. A representative will join us for the board meeting during which we'll discuss possible collaborations for 2015-2016. The thought is that we'll work to improve and clarify the online materials that pertain to Industry careers. We'll also continue focusing on growing the endowment that supports the Experiential Awards. We'd like to offer both at the \$1,000 level every other year, which will require \$30,000 in the fund.

Office of Public Relations and Outreach (OPRO) : Recent activities: To support the APS Education Initiative and conduct outreach to the general public, OPRO attended the following events: Future Farmers of America (FFA), National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT), Agriculture Future of America Leaders Conference and Opportunity Fair (AFA), and Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS). For these events, the APS booth was exhibited using the "Plants Get Sick Too" theme. The career banner, providing examples of employment in plant pathology, and the "Don't Get Caught with Your Plants Down" banner and T-shirts worn by APS members staffing the booth help to attract visitors. The spore dispersal demonstration, using colorful Orbeez™ as raindrops and coffee grounds as spores, keeps the visitors at the booth to help start conversations about plant pathology and careers in our discipline. It is also a demonstration that teachers can take back to their classrooms, since no living organisms are involved. A flat screen monitor continuously shows the 10 short videos. While hard copies of information about APS and plant pathology were available at the booth, this year the informational packet normally provided was sent electronically to teachers via e-mail. This was definitely appreciated by the teachers, and allows us to contact them post-convention to remind them about what they saw and discussed at the booth. It is becoming more apparent at the FFA convention that there are just as many students involved in vegetable and greenhouse production as there are in traditional row and tree crops, perhaps due to continued urbanization in the U.S. It was surprising to learn that a number of FFA teachers did not know what Extension was and were not even aware of Extension activities, either within their county or state, including plant diagnostic laboratories.

Focus: 1) Currently, the majority of our activities are focused on the Education Initiative (Outreach to Students and Teachers): Step 1: Attract K-12 students to science by interacting with the students and their teachers. Step 2: Attract science-oriented high school students to plant sciences/biology undergraduate majors, either directly or via their teachers. Step 3: Attract plant sciences/biology undergraduates to plant pathology graduate programs, either directly or via their professors. By interacting with students, we are indirectly interacting and engaging their parents and other adults, which provides the additional benefit of outreach to the general public. 2) Provide APS members with materials to use in their own outreach efforts to students, teachers and the general public. Materials developed for the APS booth are or will be available on the OPRO website. Anyone can duplicate and personalize the APS booth for their own outreach efforts, be it a department or individual member.

Highlights: To facilitate our outreach efforts, OPRO board members and other APS members will be attending these events: Future Farmers of America Convention, National Association of Biology Teachers Conference, Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences, Agriculture Future of America Leaders Conference and Opportunity Fair, and the USA Science and Engineering Festival. We continue to update the booth and material to be given away at these events. We are currently finalizing an activity called “What Plant Pathogen Are You?”, which is a fun personality quiz, shamelessly borrowed from ASM. It was first displayed at the 2015 APS Annual Meeting. These types of activities are essential at student/teacher and general public events. Brochures to be developed include one on plant pathology internships, Extension websites and contacts for each state, and plant pathology for the general public. Also planned is a Plant Pathology Science Festival Tool Box to send to all plant pathology departments as a “starter” package for outreach activities, if they do not already have one, and a challenge to bring their own outreach activities to the next APS Annual Meeting for a competition.

Publications Board (PUB): The APS Publications Board continues to rethink its journal publications strategies and is regularly implementing new technologies and improvements as appropriate. APS journals are healthy and doing very well with all print journals having a 2014 impact factor above 3.0 for the first time. EICs have made major strides in reducing the time from submission to a decision below 35 days. All journal metrics are strong and healthy. Similarly, PMN, PHP, APS Press, PHI and Phytopathology News are doing great. Except for PHP, which is in the process of being moved to the Atypon and Manuscript Central platforms, no major changes are needed.

APS organized an ad hoc Journals Task Force (JTF) to strategically review APS print journals MPMI, Phytopathology and Plant Disease. The taskforce was led by an external consultant Simon Inger, from Simon Inger Consulting, UK. The JTF included members of council, several EICs and active APS members. A formal report was provided back to PubBoard and Council. Following is the report summary:

The strategic review process of the APS Journals has shown that the journals program is healthy, and that the operation is fundamentally sound.

The market for authors is increasingly competitive, and to ensure its continued leading position in the field, APS should consider a number of steps to improve author satisfaction, including better author information, clearer instructions and policy for open access, improved quality and relevance of reviewer feedback, and perhaps better defined journal scope statements.

There are some potential threats to the future of the publishing program, but mostly from the shift in business model to open access, if indeed this takes off. In a future that may become 100% open access, with author payments for publication, the APS remains a profitable and perfectly viable operation. However, its surplus from the journals program would be decreased and so if the Society requires a long-term high level of surplus from the journals program, it will need to expand the program. Ultimately the program would need to publish approximately 2.3 times as many articles as it does today.

Two opportunities for growth have been identified:

- 1. The first of these is in a new subject area, Phytobiome, and the task force appointed for the strategic review has embraced and is excited by the opportunity for this new title, which should have a sound financial future.*
- 2. The second opportunity, which is subject to further investigation, is a title designed initially to pick up articles rejected from the existing titles due to scope or the level of the research, but otherwise still sound. The research has shown that many APS-rejected articles are ultimately published in highly respectable journals.*

The next three sections provide opportunity for brief, focused and bulleted points

Key scientific or societal issues:

- Assuring the long-term health of our journals.
- Requiring ORCID identifiers for all authors
- Ability to transfer manuscripts among APS journals within Manuscript Central upon rejection in one journal for consideration in another journal. This will retain authors with APS journals.
- Launching of the new Phytobiomes journal.

Highlights of plans for next year:

- Successfully launching the Phytobiomes Journal.
- Moving PHP to Atypon and Manuscript Central and indexing it as a journal in various databases.

Appointments for 2015-2016

- a. Pam Roberts, *Plant Health Progress*
- b. Cristi Palmer, *Plant Management Network*
- c. Darin Eastburn, *APS Press*
- d. Katy Stevenson, *Plant Health Instructor*
- e. Alison Robertson, *Plant Disease*
- f. Krishna Subbarao, *Phytopathology*
- g. Kenny Seebold, *Phytopathology News*
- h. Kerik Cox, *Plant Disease Management Reports*
- i. John McDowell, *MPMI*
- j. Carolyn Young, *Phytobiomes*

Public Policy Board (PPB) Recent activities: PPB advocacy efforts focus on the Phytobiomes Initiative, with the goal of having a comprehensive understanding of phytobiomes and the capacity for their optimization by 2025. • Facilitating the development of a roadmap for the Phytobiomes Initiative o Obtained funding to support Phytobiomes 2015: Designing a New Paradigm for Crop Improvement, a workshop held in Washington DC (June 30-July 2, 2015). The goal of the workshop was to bring together a broad community of scientists to establish current and future priorities in phytobiomes research, identifying knowledge, technological, infrastructural, and training gaps. The workshop participants discussed the first draft of the Roadmap for Phytobiomes Research and Translation o A second workshop to refine the Roadmap is to be held Sept 14-16, 2015 • Identifying specific ways in which various funding agencies can engage to support the Phytobiomes Initiative o Promoted funding for phytobiomes at agencies and offices in Wash DC during March, 2015 spring meeting (and in other opportunities) •

Engagement of other partners, including other national scientific societies, industry, and the international research community o The Workshop provided a forum for engaging industry, other scientific societies, etc. Representatives from large, multinational companies and small participated, as well as various government agencies. • Raising awareness (webinars, social media, newsletters, etc) o PPB made at least 12 presentations on the Phytobiomes Initiative to diverse audiences, including industry, government and academic groups. Various news outlets have picked up the Phytobiome initiative, e.g., www.nature.com/news/plant-denizens-get-the-big-science-treatment-1.17920 • Placing an APS Policy Fellow in Washington DC o Elizabeth Stulberg began her appointment in OSTP in Nov, 2014. She has been working with Jo Handelsman (OSTP) with a focus on plant microbiomes. PPB provided comments for timely issues, including a request for comment from the OSTP on microbiomes. PPB currently mentors four early career interns on policy work. We also mentor a Public Policy Fellow (Elizabeth Stulberg). PPB informs/educates membership with a monthly newsletter, TWEETS, news capsules, co-sponsorship of sessions at APS Meetings, and the PPB booth at APS Meetings. We raised funding for and placed an EPA Subject Matter Expert (SME, Wayne Wilcox). On behalf of PPB, Eversole Associates monitors important areas such as regulatory issues.

Focus: Advocacy for funding for phytobiomes research to ensure a healthy, safe and secure food supply. This effort includes advocacy for ancillary needs such as: -Preservation of microbial collections important to plant pathology -Education and training of plant pathologists to meet future demands of agriculture -Soil health

Highlights: Focused advocacy for Phytobiomes Initiative, which includes: • Refining and publishing the Roadmap for Phytobiomes Research and Translation • Promote establishment of Industry/public sector collaborations in fundamental and translational phytobiomes research •

Identify leaders to coordinate and leverage studies across diverse hosts and ecosystems • Facilitate development of international research networks • Promote development a cross-trained workforce for future phytobiomes advances • Advocate for collaborative support for a Washington DC APS Policy Fellow from other societies

APS Subject Matter Committees

Bacteriology: Major committee activities planned for next year include: 1) writing more impact statements for bacterial plant diseases, 2) organizing teleconferences for interest group meetings to promote research collaborations, 3) posting more teaching materials on the website, 4) exchanging teaching specimens (with APHIS permits), and 5) Providing more online special/guest lectures through active communications among committee members involved in undergraduate/graduate education in the field of plant pathology. In addition, continuous efforts will be made to create more job opportunities in the field of phytobacteriology and related areas.

Biological Control: Recent activities: Developed proposals to organize a symposium at the annual APS meeting. The symposium is titled "Beneficial plant pathogens for biological control of weeds" and would update attendants on the status of this important discipline within plant pathology. Focus: Reignite interest on biological control as part of a holistic approach to manage plant diseases. To this effect, we have proposed to conduct a symposium on the use of beneficial plant pathogens for biological control of weeds. Highlights: Organize an idea cafe on the topic of beneficial plant pathogens for biological control of weeds.

Biotechnology: Recent activities: The Biotechnology Committee is dedicated to increasing scientific literacy in the public sector on the topic of genetic modification. Increasing public discourse about GMOs should be met with increasing engagement from those scientific communities which use biotechnology. To support this effort, the committee has proposed a special session titled "Fostering scientific literacy about biotechnology". The goal of this session is to hear from biotechnology experts who are actively engaging the public on this topic. The committee hopes that this session will encourage APS members to participate in the modern discussion on the value and role of biotechnology in agriculture and research. This session supports the strategic goals 2, 4, and 5 by providing insight from experienced professionals on a topic that will ultimately affect the direction of research for disease solutions. We would like to host an idea café sometime after the special session where members can continue the discussion. Focus: - Addressing public misunderstandings about the science of biotechnology in agriculture - The economic impact of public rejection of biotechnology - Communication strategies for engaging the public on the topic of GMOs. Highlights: - Special session on "Fostering scientific literacy about biotechnology" - Idea café on "GMO and organic crop production"

Chemical Control: Recent activities: In 2014 the Chemical Control Committee submitted a special session proposal for discussion of the science behind SDHI Fungicides. This special session was not chosen for inclusion in the 2015 annual APS meeting. Other discussion focused on the historical impact of chemical disease control strategies on improvements in crop yield. This spawned a discussion of a potential special session for the 2017 meeting.

Focus: Members of the chemical control committee continue to be engaged with agricultural stakeholders and the public. We form a strong community of scientific professionals who can facilitate discussion about where agriculture has been in terms of chemical control strategies and where we are headed in the 21st century. We are aligned with Goals 4 and 5 to increase opportunities for professional growth and development and prioritizing action on issues most relevant to the future of plant pathology

Highlights: The Chemical Control committee plans to use the 2016 year to develop a special session tentatively titled "Disease Management Classics: Where we have been and where we are going". The first portion of the session will focus on the historical perspective and scientific breakthroughs in plant disease chemical control. The second half will focus on highlighting the new science that will lead us through the 21st century. The committee is focused on holding this session for the 2017 meeting in order to have enough time to plan a high-quality session and also find co-sponsoring committees. Potential co-sponsors include the Industry committee, Extension committee, and Epidemiology committee.

Collections and germplasm: This committee had 2 meetings in 2014: 1) Penn State University Dept. of Plant Pathology meeting with a report on standards in genomic sciences, and 2) at Univ. of California-Davis Dept. of Viticulture and Enology (see Genomic Sciences 2014, 9:27 doi:10.1186/1944-3277-9-27 and Appl. Environ. Microbiol. early online doi:10.1128/AEM.01176-15).

Blair Goates' collection of cereal grain smut fungi is now housed at Fort Collins, CO. To help with establishment of differential cultivar sets for various pathogens, the CPPSI (Collaboration for Plant Pathogen Strain Identification) subcommittee was formed, led by Phyllis Himmel, new director of CPPSI housed at UC-Davis Seed Central (<http://www.cppsi.org/>). Doug Luster reported that the National Cancer Research Institute bacterial collection will be housed at Fort Detrick, not at Fort Collins. Frank Dugan and Gary Kinard gave an update on the USDA ARS Global GRIN project. A new federal computer security system protection may delay implementation of Global GRIN, for which the release date is not yet known. An increasing number of USDA, public, and private culture collections are being backed up at the NCGRP. The committee is holding a meeting at the USDA NCGRP focused on orphaned or endangered collections, with participants from USDA, NSF, DOE, and CDC as well as 17 different 'living' collections. Plant virologists are being engaged to assure virology resources are protected and available as well.

Crop loss Assessment and Risk Evaluation (CARE): Recent activities: A special session on climate forecasting and disease cycles spanning multiple seasons proposed by David Gent and Alissa Kriss was unanimously supported for CLARE co-sponsorship, with Epidemiology being the primary sponsor. Erick DeWolf suggested a session to present basic information on the pathogen and disease as a pro active response to the risk it poses to wheat. Given the limited knowledge base, a relatively short session was proposed for 2016, with potential for a follow up session later. Support was unanimous for this idea. Shaukat Ali discussed the potential for emergence of wheat blast disease in North America and elsewhere. Serge Savary provided an update on activities of the International Society for Plant Pathology and its subject matter committee on food and fiber crop security, potential for assessment of global losses for each of 10 to 15 major crops, and opportunities for collaboration with CLARE. Forrest Nutter suggested special topics publications could be an avenue to increase visibility of key issues that CLARE and its members address. David Gent suggested steps to be taken to encourage collaboration amongst committee members, secure funding, and work towards actionable research. Dave, Alissa Kriss, Serge, Carla, Paul, and Karen will correspond about how to increase the visibility, communication, and impact of CLARE. Nominations for Vice Chair were sought, and Kelsey Andersen was nominated and elected unanimously. The CLARE committee organized the 15th Melhus Student symposium: From local to global: new developments in disease risk prediction and crop loss assessment.

Focus: -impact of Crop loss -how to assess Crop loss and impact -how to increase visibility of Crop loss and plant pathology in general -climate change -food Security and safety

Highlights: -Increase visibility of the CLARE Committee -Emphasize the role of CLARE in evaluating impact of the plant pathology profession

Diseases of Ornamental Plants: The Committee is interested in proposing a Poster Huddle, to include an organized effort to recruit and submit relevant posters. The Committee also expressed a preference for webinars where the speaker can be seen. Finally, the Committee raised the question as to whether APS should have a marketing department.

Diversity and Equality: *Focus areas:* Raise awareness of diversity issues within the field of plant pathology. Ensure all APS members are safe, secure, and welcome at APS meeting venues. Ensure APS members have appropriate access to professional development that aligns with their individual needs. Provide leadership on mentoring of all early career plant pathologists. *Highlights:* Prepare and deliver a diversity-oriented workshop. Organize a networking social for LGBTQA members. Advocate for consideration of diversity and equality issues in selecting future APS meeting sites. Explore and advance strategies for providing high quality mentorship of all early career plant pathologists.

Early Career Professionals: Recent activities: We have set up a Facebook, LinkedIn and Gmail account for ECP. The Facebook group will be utilized a job announcement sharing site. The LinkedIn account is currently under construction. The Gmail account is being utilized for all correspondence between members and important documents pertaining to the yearly activities of ECP are being stored on Google Drive for future chairs and vice chairs to have access to. We also successfully held Schroth Faces of the Future: Nematology symposium.

Focus: *Social networking, making connections with fellow plant pathologists at meetings and through social media *Career building: available jobs and how to prepare for them *Highlighting all the roles plant pathologists play in their careers

Highlights: 2016 Schroth Faces of the Future symposium. We will be asking for nominations and selecting speakers. 2016 symposium highlighting various careers in plant pathology. Work on a new mission statement. Build the social media websites and recruit more members.

Emerging Diseases and Pathogens: Recent activities: Sponsored a Special Session entitled 'Emerging Downy Mildew Diseases: Where Have We Been, Where Are We Going?' with the Diseases of Ornamental Plants Committee on August 4, 2016. Presentations were delivered by five speakers: J. Crouch, USDA-ARS-SMML, Beltsville, MD; F.N. Martin, USDA-ARS, Salinas, CA; M. Hausbeck, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI; P. Ojiambo, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC; and R. Micheltore, University of California, Davis, CA.

Focus: Strengthen collaborative and work relationship with the general policy committees and the subject matter committees including councilors-at-large. Engage in activities that aligns with public policy, international, industry, and educational issues and concerns.

Highlights: The Emerging Diseases and Pathogens Committee will sponsor a Field Trip on 'Current Status and Perspectives on Citrus Greening Disease in the State of Florida'. Four other committees will co-sponsor namely, Industry Committee, Regulatory Plant Pathology Committee, Integrated Plant Disease Management Committee, and Vector-Pathogen Complexes Committee. The Emerging Diseases and Pathogens Committee will also be a co-sponsor for a Special Session/Symposium with the Microbial Forensics Interest Group entitled 'Novel Applications of Whole Genome Sequencing and Bioinformatics in Microbial Forensics and Agricultural Biosecurity'.

Epidemiology: Recent activities: The Epidemiology Committee was very active again. Members of the committee organized three workshops which were given the Saturday prior to the start of the annual meeting. Additionally, a statistics workshop was given at the Potomac Division meeting. The committee also sponsored or co-sponsored three special sessions at the Annual meeting. All of the sessions and workshops were well attended. The committee is supporting the Education Center through the creation of a list of websites with disease forecasting systems. This exercise will highlight the vast diversity of decision systems and will be useful for anyone looking to explore methods in forecasting disease or for specific information.

Focus: • Foster collaboration within The American Phytopathological Society (APS) on issues regarding all aspects of plant disease epidemiology (e.g., ecological and quantitative epidemiology), • Serving as a bridge connecting applied and basic phytopathology; and • To coordinate the planning and organization of special sessions for APS annual meetings. • Foster international collaboration within the community of plant disease epidemiology and related disciplines.

Highlights: 1) Sponsor at least two special sessions 2) Organize at least two workshops at the Annual meeting 3) Organize at least one workshop at a Division meeting.

Evolutionary Genetics and Genomics: Recent activities: The Evolutionary Genetics and Genomics Committee in 2014-2015 continued to develop training workshops and educational symposia to update APS members on the latest advances in population genetic and genomic analyses and technologies. EGG committee organized two workshops at the 2015 Annual meeting: 1) Analysis of Population Genetic Data in R (repeating an extremely popular session at the 2014 meeting) and 2) RNASeq Experimental Design and Analysis. The workshop on Analysis of Population Genetic Data in R was sold out with 75 attendees. Feedback after the meeting was overwhelmingly positive. Because all the tools and materials for the workshop were open source and freely available, this workshop empowered the attendees to immediately get up and running in population genetic data analysis. The workshop on RNASeq Experimental Design and Analysis was sold out within a week of registration started. Overall, the success of our committee sponsored workshop simply reflected our vision in taking a leadership in genetics and genomics and serving the needs of the APS community at large. In addition, our committee sponsored a special session on "Impact of repeat elements on genome evolution and pathogen biology". This session draws upon recent advances in our understanding of how transposable elements and other repeated nucleic acid sequences have influenced genome organization and function in some prominent plant pathogens. Our members also had numerous discussions and presentations with stakeholders to discuss and investigate how genetics and genomics tools are used in disease management.

Focus: The major scientific focus of our committee is the next generation sequencing technologies and their applications, and genome organization. **Highlights:** Since our workshops have been so high in demand, our primary focus will be in developing exciting and engaging workshops and programs for the 2016 APS meeting in Tampa, Florida. Our committee will develop 3 workshops: 1) Using the R statistical computing language for reproducible science (Niklaus Grunwald and Zhian Kamvar). 2) RNASeq Experimental Design and Analysis (Li-Jun Ma) and 3) Design and analysis of amplicon sequencing for targeted multiplexed genotyping (Lance Cadle-Davidson). We also proposed to have 2 special sessions: 1) Disease management in the genomics era (will be organized by postdoc and graduate student: Giovanna Danies and Javier F. Tabima). 2) proposed by Steven Klosterman and Li-Jun Ma.

Extension: Recent activities: The Extension committee proposed a special symposium for the 2015 annual meeting titled 'Measuring change, determining value and presenting the impact'. This symposium was designed to use real examples from the audience, integrate a discussion format and provide the audience with a 'how to' approach to develop impact reports. In addition, the concept of an impact report 'manual' was discussed. However, the proposal was not selected for the 2015 meeting. In response, the Extension committee is re-visiting this concept for the 2016 meeting and is re-packaging the program into a workshop.

Focus: The Extension committee's mission is broad, but one of the most important things we are focusing on is generation of impact data and statements. Science in general, and Extension specifically, is faced with decreasing funds and an increasing amount of scrutiny on the way those dwindling resources are spent. Consequently, we are more frequently being asked to 'prove' the impacts of our work. However, plant pathologists have little to no experience working with social science metrics (for example, what behavioral changes occurred in clientele, etc.) or financial impacts (for example, how much money did our work save growers?). Similarly, presenting these impacts is equally a challenge; a skill more in line with marketing strategy than plant disease management. The Extension committee is trying to improve our ability to measure and present impacts. **Highlights:** In 2016, we are proposing a workshop and a field trip. The workshop, tentatively titled 'Building Impact: Working Up the Fluff' is designed to teach participants to quantify behavioral and economic change and draft impact statements. Research and Extension examples will be submitted prior to the meeting and through an interactive session to poll the attendees. The workshop will be interactive and potentially include small group think tanks. This will be organized as a 'how to' workshop to address the future needs of interested graduate students and younger faculty members. The field trip, not yet titled, is designed to give attendees an in-depth look at plant pathology in several important industries in Florida. Specifics are yet to be determined, but a visit to the Land at Disney, and possibly vegetable transplant houses, fumigation demonstrations and being investigated.

Forest pathology: Recent activities: New activities include planning the field trip for APS 2016 in Tampa Florida, and getting ideas together for sessions for 2016. We also discussed ways to bridge collaborations with forest pathology lab across the country, and started a discussion on the regulation of infected hosts, including live trees and fire wood. **Focus:** Lack of jobs in forest pathology compared to the needs Training new forest pathologists Changing regulatory standards for movement of hosts Developing collaborative projects. **Highlights:** Forest pathology field trip will be held in Florida next year and be centered in Mangroves.

Graduate Student: Recent activities: Our main focus as the graduate student committee is to engage undergraduate and graduate students in plant pathology, outreach activities, and APS events to foster their professional growth and development and address current plant pathology issues: such as communicating with the general public about the importance of our field. This past year we developed a quarterly newsletter that

was sent to all APS registered graduate students that included information on activities at APS (session planning, the roles of our committee officers, what APS foundation is) and listing job sites to help students transition into their next career goal. We continued to work on our video to show the general public the importance of plant pathology by showcasing "A Day without Plant Pathologists" and showing what we would lose (coffee, cotton clothing, rubber tires) if we didn't control plant diseases. We encouraged students to submit impact statements for the councilor's challenge. We have also planned special sessions for the 2016 APS meeting that would focus on professional development: one is "The Best Talk I Ever Heard" which will showcase student selected speakers who excel at presentations and discuss what made their presentations so good and "Fieldside Manner" which is about how to communicate effectively to stakeholders whether you work internationally or in academia, government, industry, or extension. Additionally we worked this year to make more undergraduate students aware of the Frank L. Howard Undergraduate Research award and we were very successful with 29 applicants this year compared to 2 or 3 in past years. We also had another successful year running the Art in Phytopathology contest with over 40 entries received. Focus: The key issues we focus on are early career engagement and professional development. Highlights: We hope to keep increasing awareness of the APS Foundation travel and research awards to undergraduate and graduate students so they may take advantage of these opportunities. We will continue to prepare our session proposals for 2016 and develop new ones for 2017 that will provide useful information and tools for professional development of students but will also be helpful to APS members at different stages in their career. We plan to continue to run the Art in Phytopathology contest in order to foster a sense of community and to share great artwork of plant diseases.

Host Resistance: Recent activities: Plant diseases have a devastating impact on agricultural production every year. Evolution of pathogens, international travel and trade and alterations in climate play crucial roles in emergence and spread of commonly known and new diseases. Elucidation of mechanism(s) underlying host resistance and development of new disease management strategies that incorporate host resistance are essential in minimizing crop losses in a cost effective and environmentally safe manner. The Host Resistance Committee's primary mission is to foster awareness and disseminate information related to identifying mechanisms of resistance and integrated management strategies that improve the host's ability to defend itself against pathogen attack. The field of host resistance is at the core of Plant Pathology profession. Plant Health Management and Biology of Plant-Microbe/pest interactions are two key branches of APS vision for plant pathology for the 21st century and host plant resistance will be an integral component of these two branches. Host resistance will also be an important component of most integrated pest management (IPM) strategies. Healthy plants are essential to secure a safe food and energy supply for a continuously growing global population in an environmentally safe and sustainable way and host resistance will play an important role in realizing higher yields to feed the growing population. Genomics will become a key component of host plant resistance research and will lead to development of new and enhanced resistant varieties. Focus: • Phenotyping strategies for identification of host resistance gene • Genome-wide association of disease resistance to different pathogens or isolates/races • Germplasm characterization and enhancement for resistance genes • Pathogen surveys for avirulence genes/effectors • Outreach to public through layman and scientific writing Highlights: • Development of new statistical tools for analyzing large dataset • Development of new controlled phenotyping toolbox for breeding and genetic studies.

Industry: Recent activities: To increase opportunities for professional growth and development, the Industry Committee hosted an Industry & Extension Networking Event (~225 participants), a Graduate Students & Industry luncheon (~175 participants) and two special sessions, entitled "Careers in Industry" (~200 attendees) and "New Products & Services" (~100 attendees). This event and special sessions allowed for open discussion between students, professors, and industry representatives regarding career opportunities, new upcoming products, and other relevant issues. Focus: Helping graduate students prepare for future careers in plant protection Fostering collaboration and dialogue between university and industry. Highlights: Industry & Extension Networking Event Graduate Student & Industry Lunch New Products and Services Special Session Preparing your students for Careers in Industry Special Session.

Integrated Pest Management: Committee reported successful session at APS15 on "Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV)/Drones for Applications in Plant Pathology. Principal focus is on planning proposed session on nanotechnology

Molecular and Cellular Phytopathology: Recent activities: The committee will continue discussing our role in formulating APS impact statements. Majority of members contribute to the education and mentoring of next generation of scientists, with research emphasis on bridging the gaps between fundamental discoveries to practical applications. Committee members will continue the dialogue to highlight our contribution to the public through APS impact statements. The committee is planning to co-organize three special sessions for 2016 APS meeting: "Translational research for the management of complex disease" (cosponsored with Mycotoxicology, Biological Controls, and Integrated Plant Disease Management committees), "Genome editing - a novel toolbox for improving disease resistance" (cosponsored with Host Resistance committee), and "See the unseen: metatranscriptomics unveils plant- and vector-pathogen interactions" (cosponsored with Evolutionary Genetics and Genomics committee). Focus: One initiative the committee would like to promote is expanding on-line presence of APS activities, particularly with short presentations and webinars. More APS special and technical sessions should be made available on-line, through a variety of outlets (not limited to apsnnet.org), to broaden the impact. The committee also emphasized the importance of recruiting new members to our committee and having more members actively involved. Improving participation from early career professionals, private sector members and international members will strengthen committee's activities. Highlights: The committee is planning to co-organize three special sessions for 2016 APS meeting that will highlight translational research on improving disease management, host resistance, and genomics. These sessions will be cosponsored with Mycotoxicology, Biological Controls, Integrated Plant Disease Management, Host Resistance and Evolutionary Genetics and Genomics committees. Committee will also participate in formulating APS impact statements that can best reflect the committee members' contribution to plant pathology.

Mycology: Recent activities: A major activity of our committee has been to develop a special session on the importance of cryptic species and their impact on disease management. We began planning the special session in January. We contacted a total of seven potential speakers and secured four. We also saw a need to be able to offer the Fungal Foray as a field trip option for 2016, so our activities were advanced planning of the trip. We identified and engaged Brantlee Richter and Matt Smith, faculty at University of Florida, to help in pre-planning arrangements. Finally, we identified Cassandra Swett to serve as our APS-to-MSA liaison. One great thing about Cassandra is that she was able to attend the Phytobiomes initiative, spoke at our meeting on this topic, and is also active in MSA. Indeed, we had several active and interested participants in this year's committee meeting in Pasadena and hope to continue that through engagement this coming year. Focus: • Providing mycologically

based education materials for middle/high school education outreach • Determine the effect of one fungus/one name initiative on plant pathogen diagnosis and reporting. Highlights: • Determining how to utilize information (OTUs) from phytobiomes initiative projects in a practical identification and management perspective • Plan fungal foray for future APS meetings • Discuss future issues associated with identification/classification of fungal plant pathogens and how those issues can be solved using phytobiomes approaches.

Mycotoxigenology: Recent activities: The Mycotoxigenology Committee has been involved in highlighting current research and identifying knowledge gaps in the management of mycotoxin contamination in food and feed crops. For the 2015 annual meeting in Pasadena, CA, the Committee organized and sponsored the special session “Mycotoxins: From Production, Secretion, and Detection to Effects on Plants and Animals”. This session highlighted the work of mycotoxin researchers from a variety of disciplines including plant pathology, chemistry, animal science, and human medicine. The Committee discussed increasing communication within the Committee/society and with stakeholders and the general public through a greater online presence. Both a collaborative website for committee members and a public website to provide current and relevant information related to mycotoxins were proposed. The importance of multi-disciplinary, integrated approaches to mycotoxin management was discussed and a special session on this topic was proposed for 2016. Focus: During the annual meeting, the Mycotoxigenology Committee focused on two issues: 1) the need for multi-disciplinary approaches to addressing the problem of mycotoxin contamination in food and feed, and 2) the need for better communication within the committee, society, and with stakeholders and the general public. Highlights: In order to highlight the progress on and effectiveness of integrated approaches to complex problems such as mycotoxin management, a special session titled “Translational Research for the Management of Complex Diseases” was proposed by Charles Woloshuk and approved by the committee. This special session will highlight the results of a multi-state interdisciplinary project funded by USDA-NIFA. A collaborative website for the Mycotoxigenology Committee will be set up and utilized by the group to increase interaction between annual meetings. One goal of this collaborative website will be to increase participation of early career members in committee and society activities.

Nematology: Recent activities: The Nematology committee successfully hosted a special session entitled: Nematology: From Microbiomes to Management on Tuesday, August 4, 2015. The speakers include Dr. Aurelio Ciancio from the Institute of Sustainable Plant Protection, Italy who presented “Soil microbiome potential for management of phytoparasitic nematodes”. Dr. Nathan Schroder, University of Illinois gave a talk entitled “Comparative nematode neuroanatomy: wandering through worm wiring”. Dr. Jared Ali, Michigan State University presented “Multitrophic interaction and the chemical ecology of nematodes”. Dr. Susannah Cooper, Monsanto Company, presented “Breeding for nematode resistance: new phenotypic tools for a new era”. Mr. Don Sklarczyk, owner of Sklarczyk Seed Farm, presented “Advances in Science to Meet Real World Crop Production Needs”. The session was well-attended and the audience provided good feedback. The Nematology committee had the second most number of APS impact statements submitted and was awarded \$300 for the committee's efforts. The committee also helped in the selection of Schroth Faces of the Future Awards. The awardees this year include Dr. Paulo Vieira, Virginia Tech University, Dr. Shiyan Chen, Cornell University, Dr. Alfonso Cabrera, University of California-Riverside, and Dr. Travis Faske, University of Arkansas. The Nematology Committee is also planning to submit a request for a workshop/field trip at the 2016 APS meeting at Tampa, FL. Focus: Education and early career development- our newly-elected officers are both graduate students Strong proactive and united professional organization shown by increased number of membership this year. Highlights: We have plans for co-sponsorship of special sessions with other committees and possible special workshop or tour Increased graduate student membership and participation.

Pathogen Resistance: Recent activities: Pathogen Resistance Committee Members have continued to work on the developing book “Fungicide Resistance in North America”, including reviewing and updating completed chapters. The book will also include a pathogen resistance glossary, similar to the glossary offered online by APS, but restricted to only 'pathogens' (excluding host disease resistance connotations). Additionally, an idea for a multiple fungicide resistance symposium was suggested. Focus: -understanding the cause of and preventing multifungicide-resistant pathogens -increasing the number of impact statements Highlights: -Complete “Fungicide Resistance in North America” and submit for publishing in the fall -Expound on multiple resistance pathogens symposium for 2017 APS meeting -Collect names of volunteer members to be available for remote guest lecture.

Phyllosphere Microbiology: The Committee is very active around the topic of phytobiomes. Focus: Developing rigorous methods and leadership in phytobiome research involving the phyllosphere. Linking phyllosphere microbiology across disciplines: food safety, food security, and human health. Highlights: 1. Put in a session proposal for the 2016 annual meeting on “The role of the plant microbiome in human health”. 2. Co-sponsor a session “Using omic technology to learn about epidemiology”. 3. Initiate a literature review for methods/papers relevant to phyllosphere-biome research.

Plant Pathogen and Disease Detection: Recent activities: The Plant Pathogen and Disease Detection (PPDD) committee has a focus on diagnosis of plant diseases and detection of their causal agents. The committee consists of more than 30 members from US, universities, federal agencies (USDA-ARS and USDA-APHIS) and the private sector. Members of this committee participated in various scientific meetings at the national and regional level as well as in multi-state collaborative project meetings and presented research on a broad range of methods for practical application in the diagnosis of plant pathogens and plant diseases under field conditions. Member conducted research also addresses issues of methodology validation and development and application of high-throughput methods for diagnosis of plant diseases for rapid response to disease outbreaks. The committee membership promoted public-private collaborative partnerships for the deployment of user-friendly methods for the detection of plant pathogens and participated in policy discussions pertaining to the validation and application of a broad range of diagnostic methods in research and regulatory issues. Members of the PPDD actively participated in several activities of the APS including other committees and working groups and made oral and poster presentations at the 2015 annual meeting. In addition, the PPDD committee co-sponsored the 2015 symposium “Emerging Downy Mildew Diseases: Where Have We Been, Where Are We Going?” in collaboration with several other committees. The PPDD has submitted a symposium proposal for the 2016 meeting in Tampa entitled “Emerging Pathogen Detection Technologies: Translating Science into Practice” which is co-sponsored by the Diagnostics, Emerging Diseases and Pathogens and Diseases of Ornamental Plants committees. Focus: Improved diagnostics for high-throughput detection of plant pathogens and diseases caused by fungi, bacteria, nematodes, viruses and virus-like agents. Highlights: Encourage PPDD members to attend various scientific and multi-state project meetings. If our special session proposal is accepted, organize the symposium for the 2016 APS annual meeting.

Post Harvest Pathology: Recent activities: The committee proposed and granted for a special session to discuss the impact of innovative postharvest practices on trade and food safety and a field trip to understand Southern California Agriculture, focused on tree fruits and small fruits. The members were actively exchanged idea for details in organizing the symposium and field trip. Focus: Postharvest industry faces challenges in food safety issues. FSMA may influence current industry practices in various ways, thus, the committee is preparing how to improve fruit quality and safety by sound scientific research and support the industry. Highlights: The committee proposed a special session to discuss how the Food Safety Modernization Act will influence how the industry responds to the microbial community that exists on produce. Topics proposed to be discussed will include: an update on where we stand with FSMA and current industry practices; pre- and postharvest protocols; practitioners' perspective; new sanitizers on the horizon; and modern challenges that need to be met.

Regulatory plant pathology: Recent activities: To prioritize the methods and lists of pathogens as to their regulatory priority. Focus: Lists of pathogens of high priority. Evaluation of NGS techniques for the determination of pathogens. Highlights: "When Science and Politics Collide". We are specifically interested in the impact of erroneous reports (or non-official disease reports) on the movement of agricultural commodities interstate and internationally and in cases where science guided the political response in a positive manner.

Seed Pathology: Recent activities: We co-hosted a special session at the 2015 APS meeting in Pasadena California entitled: Seed Transmission of Vector-Borne Pathogens: Mysteries, Caveats, and Mechanisms. This session sought to distinguish between seedborne and seed transmitted plant diseases. It also sought to clarify the type of research data needed to establish seed as an epidemiologically significant inoculum source for vector-borne diseases. Our members also actively participated in activities related to seed health assay validation via the International Seed Health Initiative and the National Seed Health System. Focus: Harmonization and validation of seed health assays for important seed transmitted Plant diseases Identifying the true risks associated with seed-borne and seed transmitted diseases Minimizing unnecessary international trade barriers based on limited or unsubstantiated data on seed transmission of important plant diseases. Highlights: Continue minimize unnecessary trade barriers based on limited or incomplete data on the risks associated with seedborne and seed transmitted disease Work with USDA APHIS to develop effective policies that limit the spread of seed transmitted diseases without unduly limiting seed trade and movement Continue to validate and standardize seed health assays for important seedborne and seed transmitted plant diseases.

Soil Microbiology and Root Diseases: Recent activities: 1. Book revision Tim Paulitz (editor in chief of APS Press) gave an update and overview on the book. The idea to have a protocol series that would replace the old book "Methods for Research on Soilborne Phytopathogenic Fungi". This protocol series would be similar to Phytophthora book Kelly Ivors putting together. She is currently going through old the book and adding new protocols. The plan is for the series to go live this fall. Looking for volunteers to contribute to the series and submit short protocols The series will be interactive, online and subscription based - There will be a system in place to contact curator and add protocols system to add comments about what works and doesn't work. Timeline for completion is next year. Contact Tim Paulitz if interested in submitting protocols 2. Special session topics Linda Kinkel - USDA rolling out network - should we put our heads together to come up with best practices for long term ecological research (LTER) sites. Met with people from Beltsville. Get buy in from community Could be an idea café and then developed into a session for 2017. Southern California pre-conference workshop tours - soilborne pathogens taking advantage of drought stress. Grains - disease outbreak directly related to drought stress 3. Impact statements - Department heads always looking for impact statements. Difficult to compare our impact to other disciplines such as plant breeding. They are able to report on positive impacts. We are presenting the impact of the reduction in disease (reporting on reducing a negative impact) Group discussed using what people are using to justify their research in grant proposals Show that we are solving problems over a longer period of time, engage agricultural economists Sudden death syndrome is a good example of impact - John Rupe to take lead on putting this together Soil microbiology - how can we help mitigate soil health and plant health - can we address this with an impact statement? Loss of top soil and not being regenerated as fast as we are losing it . Examples; till and no till. Various approaches that people use would be a nice special session 4. Conference on soil borne pathogens - March 22 in Parlier. Student travel scholarships will be awarded 5. Multi state group w3417 - soil borne plant pathogens and sustainable pathogens Focus: Impact of soil borne diseases and soil health on crop productivity, in the U.S. and across the globe for increased productivity, sustainability and food security. Highlights: Development of online protocol series for research on soilborne diseases.

Teaching: Recent activities: One of the major initiatives taken on by members of the teaching committee in 2015 was development of a project to assess concepts, skills and employer expectations for improvement of plant pathology foundational courses and curriculum. This project was originally initiated within the Teaching Committee as an effort to collect syllabi from introductory plant pathology courses taught around the country. The idea was to use these syllabi as a resource for new faculty as they build their own introductory courses and for all faculty needing course content evaluation as part of their evaluation and promotion process. The concept of syllabus collection and summarization has expanded through teaching committee meetings, interactions with the OE, industry committee, and the AULF. As a result, we have seen the need for more in-depth analysis of what is being taught across different institutions and institution types. As a result the idea was turned into something broader, fundable and publishable. Committee member Brantlee Spakes Richter of the University of Florida took the lead on submitting a grant proposal to the USDA Higher Education Challenge program along with collaborators Maya Hayslett, Anissa Poleatewich and Kathryn Stofer. This project addresses several of APS' strategic goals. This project involves collaboration of several APS committees and will develop high value products of great benefit to our society (Goal #2). By gathering data on introductory plant pathology courses and improving plant pathology curricula we can strengthen our position as a resource for plant health information and knowledge dissemination (Goal # 3). A workshop will be held at the end of the project to provide APS members with professional development in the area of education (Goal #4). Finally, the project will allow us to document and analyze what concepts employers and instructors think are most important for plant pathology students and make recommendation for action where there are discrepancies (Goal #5). In addition to the project outlined above, the teaching committee has been working with the graduate student committee to plan and develop a session proposal in advance of the annual meeting. As a result, the session description and speaker list was finalized before the meeting and the proposal was submitted as a complete package at the meeting.

Focus: Currently the teaching committee is focusing on several areas in education: professional development, curriculum improvement and teaching innovation. We are attempting to provide professional development for instructors through special sessions and webinars on such topics as presentations, educational research, and blended learning. Our goal is to stay up to date on the latest teaching techniques and technology to provide members with professional development opportunities in the area of education. As outlined above, our proposed research project which will continue to be a focus for our committee addressed several APS strategic goals. Highlights: 1. Organize a special session entitled "the best

presentation I ever saw". The session will showcase five presentations selected by a survey graduate student nomination as the "best presentations they have ever heard". The presentations will be followed by a panel discussion on what makes them outstanding. The presentation will include lectures and extension talks 2. Organize a demo/idea café for the use of technology in teaching. Specifically, the committee will organize a demonstration of 3-D printing followed by a discussion on how this technology can be used in the classroom. 3. Organize a webinar on how to conduct educational research 4. Organize a webinar on blended learning.

Turfgrass pathology: Recent activities: The committee has continued on increasing communication among members. For facilitating this, the email list of current and previous committee members has been updated. The list server hosted in the Department of Plant Pathology at Ohio State University was used in the past but traffics of exchanging emails among the group have been down. In the new system, the chair keeps the list of members and has full control of email circulation. This helped to fast update new member information and oft out inactive members as their request. At the same time, with the updated conduit, we conducted survey among the group to collect opinions about Turfgrass Pathology Committee activities. This facilitated to promote member's participation in the APS meeting and help to evaluate previous activities and plan for our future activities.

Focus: The committee agrees on the necessity of updating the list of common names of turfgrass diseases posted on the APS website, since it has not been updated for many years, some over 20 years. Updating of this APS website is very important and makes a great impact because the US federal government and state legislature use this information as reference. Therefore, ad-hoc committee has been set up for reviewing the current version of turfgrass disease common names and collating updated information for APS. Highlights: - Update common names of turfgrass diseases in the APS website - Organize a special session relevant to turfgrass pathology - Propose a topic of Idea Cafes relevant to turfgrass disease issues - Organize a informal turfgrass pathology meeting at the next year APS meeting.

Vector-pathogen Complexes: Recent activities: Since last August, the committee has organized a field trip to view California citrus production and organized two special sessions, one with the seed pathology committee. Both sessions, "Seed transmission of vector-borne pathogens: mysteries, caveats, & mechanisms" and "Blocking the transmission of vector-borne plant pathogens, dream or reality" were a success. The field trip was well attended and has stimulated interest in a complementary trip at the next annual meeting in Florida that we are co-sponsoring with the Emerging Diseases and Pathogens Committee. Focus: There are several key issues that the VPC committee is currently working on. The committee has a keen interest elucidating the interactions between pathogens, their vectors and their hosts and what role this plays in disease development. We are particularly interested in emerging vector-borne diseases such as citrus greening and potato zebra chip as these bacterial diseases are causing severe losses in the US. Because of the threat of new and emerging vector-borne pathogens, we take an interest in the monitoring, detection and regulatory aspects of these diseases. We are also concerned for the potential of diseases vectored through seed transmission to introduce pathogens into new locations. Identification and detection of new and emerging vector-borne pathogens is essential for maintaining biosecurity. Another crucial issue that we are interested in as a committee is the role that viruses play in the phytobiome. As of right now, plant viruses are currently underrepresented as a component of the phytobiome initiative (personal communication with members of the Virology Committee), and the rationale for this is unclear. We assert that it will be job of our committee and the Virology Committee to make a case of inclusion because plant-harboring viruses are integral members of the ecosystem that interact with other biotic members of the phytobiome (arthropod vectors, plants, and other pathogens and beneficial organisms). The VPC committee also aims to engage early-career professionals (undergraduate and graduate students, and post-doctoral researchers) at APS regional and national conferences by providing opportunities to serve on special topics committees, to present research, and to be invited speakers at symposia. VPC members recognize that early positive experiences at well-attended conferences such as APS annual meetings, produce happy, productive, diverse and integrated members of the SCIENCE workforce of the future. Highlights: For the next year, we have proposed another field trip to see Florida citrus production to complement the field trip from the last annual meeting. We are co-organizing the field trip with the Emerging Diseases and Pathogens Committee. A special session has been submitted for review that the VPC committee is sponsoring entitled "The impact of vector-transmitted bacterial pathogens on diverse hosts." We have also started a group on social media to facilitate discussion among the members.

Virology: This committee sponsored one session and co-sponsored two sessions for the 2015 APS annual meeting. The committee facilitated discussions on plant microbiomes and the role of viruses in the microbiome. Highlights: Sponsoring two special sessions for next year's annual meeting: "Contributions of Plant Viruses to Phytobiome Research," and "Koch's Postulates and Virus Discovery through Next Generation Sequencing". The Committee will also co-sponsor a special session on "Science to Practice: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Combating Rose Rosette Disease." Action items for this committee included: (i) Funding to conduct research on plant virology-related areas, (ii) Unknown viruses in nature, (iii) Loss of virus culture collections and antibodies when people retire, (iv) Inclusion of viruses as a part of phytobiomes initiative, (v) Understanding factors driving expanding distributions of plant viruses, and (vi) Host factors required for virus reproduction and infection.